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14. ABSTRACT

As the US Army transitions from a force no longer sized to conduct large-scale, prolonged stability operations to an agile and versatile organization prepared to operate in a wide spectrum of complex environments against a regular, irregular, or hybrid adversary how the force chooses to employ violence in future operations will be crucial to achieving its operational and strategic goals. By examining the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan it becomes clear that the precise application of violence provides space and opportunity for the non-lethal aspects of a balanced irregular warfare campaign to take hold. Well-managed violence and balanced strategies often meant progress, while mismanagement and imbalance often resulted in lost ground. Because of political sensitivities many conventional units abstained from operations like raids and kinetic strikes and relied on special operations forces to conduct targeting. While the force made tremendous strides in the last decade a capability gap developed between special operations and conventional force targeting that needs to be filled. By educating, training, and minimal organizational changes conventional forces can better fuse intelligence and operations, manage ISR, and create a clearer understanding of the environment not just for targeting but for all operations against an irregular or hybrid threat.

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PRECISION TARGETING: FILLING THE GAP

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20 May 2013

Paper Abstract

Precision Targeting: Filling the Gap

As the US Army transitions from a force no longer sized to conduct large-scale, prolonged stability operations to an agile and versatile organization prepared to operate in a wide spectrum of complex environments against a regular, irregular, or hybrid adversary how the force chooses to employ violence in future operations will be crucial to achieving its operational and strategic goals. By examining the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan it becomes clear that the precise application of violence provides space and opportunity for the non-lethal aspects of a balanced irregular warfare campaign to take hold. Well-managed violence and balanced strategies often meant progress, while mismanagement and imbalance often resulted in lost ground. Because of political sensitivities many conventional units abstained from operations like raids and kinetic strikes and relied on special operations forces to conduct targeting. While the force made tremendous strides in the last decade a capability gap developed between special operations and conventional force targeting that needs to be filled. By educating, training, and minimal organizational changes conventional forces can better fuse intelligence and operations, manage ISR, and create a clearer understanding of the environment not just for targeting but for all operations against an irregular or hybrid threat.

INTRODUCTION

On November 25, 2006 about 40 men from an al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) partnered tribe

loaded into more than a dozen vehicles with machine guns, mortars, and rifles to kill Sheikh

Jassim Muhammad Saleh al-Suwadawi and as many members of the Albu Soda tribe as possible

for joining the "Awakening Council" weeks prior.[1] The midday attack took the seventeen Albu

Soda tribal militiamen by complete surprise, as more than 60 mortar rounds shelled the area

around the Sheikh's home.[2] The AQI fighters gunned down seven of Jassim's men, burned his

house to the ground and murdered 10 more men, women, and children in a neighboring house.[3]

AQI's brutal attack was meant to coerce the Albu Soda tribe into submission but had the

opposite effect. U.S. forces in Ramadi assisted their new Awakening ally with an armored

defensive perimeter, at least one kinetic strike[4] and ambushed others with their tanks, forcing the

enemy to flee[5] and enabled the Albu Soda tribe to re-take the offensive.[6] During a 2009 interview

an Albu Soda militiaman said of the US-tribal battle against AQI, "Right then and there, the

barrier of fear was broken in all of Ramadi, so open warfare against the terrorists took place."[7]

The battle of Sufyia and the Anbar Awakening showcased two very important themes in

irregular conflict; one was the effect of excessive violence, and the other was the effectiveness of

a balanced irregular warfare (IW) campaign. By examining the campaigns in Iraq and

Afghanistan it became clear that the precise application of violence provided space and

opportunity for the non-lethal aspects of a balanced irregular warfare campaign to take hold;[8]

some military leaders drew faulty conclusions from negative perceptions associated with night

raids and other controversial tactics, inadvertently creating imbalanced campaigns that applied

little pressure to insurgent leaders. Critical analysis shows that conventional forces have the

resources and ability to conduct precision targeting and should incorporate some targeting

techniques often applied by special operations forces so that the conventional force is not limited in their lethal / non-lethal approach to an irregular or hybrid threat. If the force wishes to institutionalize those enduring lessons from the last decade of war, those practices must be reflected in organizational structure, training, education, and leadership.

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SECTION 1: IW CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

<u>Irregular Warfare</u>

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The Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept (IW JOC) defines the irregular warfare problem as adaptive state and non-state adversaries such as terrorists, insurgents, and criminal networks who resort to irregular forms of warfare as effective ways to challenge conventional military powers.[9] The IW JOC's approach to preventing, deterring, disrupting, and defeating irregular threats is for the joint force to work with other governmental agencies, multinational partners, and (when appropriate) the host nation to first understand the situation, then plan and act together, while continually assessing and adapting their approach based on the dynamic nature of the problem.[10] Specifically, the force will undertake five activities (counterterrorism (CT), unconventional warfare (UW), foreign internal defense (FID), counterinsurgency (COIN), and stability operations (SO)) in a sequential, parallel, or blended manner, forming a coherent campaign in order to achieve operational and strategic objectives.[11] This section of the essay examines two cases, Al-Anbar, Iraq and Southern Afghanistan, in order to identify key lessons for future conflicts against an irregular threat.

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<u>Al Anbar Province, Iraq (2004-2009)</u>

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In the middle of 2005 many in the military, as well as national security analysts, felt that Iraq was not just spinning into a civil war, but that the conflict would spread throughout the region, possibly leading to successive regime changes and a U.S. military left to try and hold a

region in place.[12] By 2006, the security situation was so bad that the White House and the press were going back and forth about whether or not the conflict should be called a civil war.[13] Regardless of classification, AQI was trying to incite a civil war, along sectarian lines, and some Iraqis accept the fact that, in some areas, AQI got them there.[14] By March 2008, however the Department of Defense reported successive improvements in Iraq's security environment with gains also seen politically, economically, and diplomatically. The report continued, that from "June 2007 to March 2008 sectarian violence dropped by 90%...with coalition and civilian deaths dropping by more than 70%."[15] 2008's fragile security improvements continued and in 2009 the U.S. announced it would begin reducing forces. While Iraq's long-term political and domestic stability remains unclear, the country's turnaround from the dark days of 2006 is undisputed.

Progress in Al Anbar should not be attributed to new U.S. counterinsurgency operations, the surge, U.S. CT operations, an increase in Iraqi Security Forces numbers, or even the tribal sheiks that stood up to Al Qaeda. Rather, it was all of those actions combined that led to the tremendous gains against AQI in Al Anbar province and throughout the country.[16] The Anbar Awakening in the fall of 2006 was not the province's first tribal rejection of Al Qaeda. An awakening, of sorts, had first been tried a year prior, without U.S. support, and ended poorly.[17] What allowed the 2006 awakening to succeed was the willingness for both sides to compromise as allies and support each other towards a common purpose. For the U.S., the willingness to fully support the tribes' AQI rejection with more than moral support symbolized a shift in U.S. strategy (largely because nothing else was working) to a more holistic irregular warfare approach. By co-opting the tribes U.S. conventional force leaders first accepted the UW approach as valid and once implemented, immediately brought a robust UW force to bear.

If the strategy was correct and the situation so improved by 2007, then why were things so bad from 2004 to 2006, and what can be learned from that period? According to the Anbari Sheikhs who participated in the Awakening, an over reactive and heavy-handed U.S. military, unfulfilled promises (coupled with over-realistic expectations of what the Americans could provide), combined with al-Qaeda and Shi'a extremists caused the insurgency.[18] From 2003 to 2004 the U.S. strategy for dealing with security problems was to destroy or deter the enemy, through force, while attempting to rebuild the Iraqi government. Aggressive tactics used during both assaults into Fallujah and not apologizing after accidentally killing civilians were examples many Iraqis gave as reasons they allied with the insurgency.[19] Anbari Sheiks claimed, "The Americans had no experience with our culture"[20] and used "violence and toughness" to deal with problems until 2006.[21] Two other Iraqis discussed the seemingly indiscriminate approach American forces resorted to in order to quell violence in 2004, "The Americans took innocent people, and the insurgent is free to go in and out – they don't even come close to him."[22] The second said, "I'll give you an example of how the Coalition forces behaved at the time. They would attack and search houses, and they searched the houses of innocent people. So people saw the Americans trash houses and arrest innocent people, while the insurgents – the bad guys – were moving about freely."[23] Regardless of the intentions, U.S. forces were creating animosity while AQI was rooting itself in the population, symbolized by the black Al Qaeda flags that flew from rooftops and were draped over compound walls.[24] The wide-spread perception of indiscriminate U.S. violence against civilians and an inability to get the right bad guys, despite AQI's ruthless intimidation and coercive tactics, drove many Sunnis to accept AQI's message that joining with them was in their best interest.

When 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division (1/1AD) came into Ramadi in the summer of 2006 they brought with them a fresh COIN approach to combating their irregular adversaries.[25] They also recognized the friction between AQI and the Sunni tribes, from the first Awakening attempt in 2005, and the potential to exploit that seam and build on relationships previously established with traditional tribal leaders.[26] 1/1 AD's efforts to court the tribes would eventually pay off as AQI's widespread violence and usurpation of traditional tribal authority left the tribal elders with no other choice but to combat the terrorist group, supplementing US COIN operations with an enormous UW force (eventually comprising 25 of Anbar's 31 tribes).[27]

In the summer of 2006, all of the IW approaches were coming together in Ramadi. By the fall the city would experience "the first all-of-military counterinsurgency fight in the war."[28] Before 1/1AD began its traditional COIN approach in Ramadi, however, US Special Operations Task Force 714 (TF 714) had been conducting CT operations at an unprecedented pace, in what they considered the worst city in Iraq.[29] TF 714 even began executing daylight raids in Ramadi, an unprecedented move for the Task Force that would increase casualties, in order to maintain pressure on a clever enemy that was difficult to target.[30] CT operations were not only at an all-time high but were also better synchronized with a battle space owner (BSO – conventional force responsible for securing a certain area) who was conducting traditional COIN for the very first time in the area.[31]

From 2006 to 2007, the Anbar tribes drove AQI leaders out at a pace that U.S. forces were incapable of matching, forcing AQ affiliated tribes to either join the awakening or significantly reduce their support to the insurgency. The U.S. 2007-2008 surge provided additional forces to conduct counterinsurgency and stability operations and with a larger Iraqi

security force, the numbers proved too difficult for a decimated AQI force to re-emerge to significant levels.

The 2006 US all-of-military COIN fight in truth reflected a balanced IW operational strategy that blended SO/COIN, CT, FID, and UW. They were blended to "coherently address" the irregular AQI threat.[32] It was not the use of violence that fueled the insurgency during 2003-2004; it was the imprecise use of that violence. It was not night raids, per se; it was the compounded effect of night raids against innocent men and their subsequent long-term detention that was the source of frustration. Both the perception of indiscriminate U.S. violence and AQI pushed the tribes away. It is important to note that it was not a new U.S. approach that endeared the tribes back into the fold; it was AQI's extreme use of violence. 1/1 AD's new COIN approach provided the tribes a partner they were willing to accept; the CT force's precision raids created space and opportunity; and a robust, comprehensive, and balanced national IW strategy prevented AQI from returning in significant numbers.

Southern Afghanistan (2006-2012)

After a crushing defeat in 2001 the Taliban (TB) had returned to Afghanistan with force in the spring/summer of 2006. But after being beaten so swiftly why did the TB have so much support five years later? In short, the Taliban took advantage of a limited stability force and exploited both legitimate grievances and partial IW campaigns to gain support and ingrain themselves back into society. The U.S. response to this resurgence was a selective clear-hold-build strategy, but the build was focused on economic and infrastructure development instead of building capacity that addressed many grievances that the TB were exploiting.[33] By 2009, the U.S. adapted a new strategy focused on population-centric COIN and in 2010 that strategy expanded to include a more robust CT and UW approach in support of existing COIN and FID

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operations. In this case, the proper application of violence in concert with a balanced IW campaign plan typically resulted in the best results. With political sensitivity to night raids and aerial delivered munitions, specific to Afghanistan, there were many instances where employing violence was avoided when what was needed was an increase in its precise application to create space for other strategies, which were addressing grievances, to take hold.

After the TB's routing, neither the U.S. nor the international coalition had the number of forces on the ground to prevent the TB's return. In 2006 the U.S. had roughly 2.6 brigade sized combat teams in country.[34] As a comparison, Iraq had seven times the U.S. numbers (141,000 U.S. or 15.7 BCT) during same period.[35] Foreign troop levels, when combined, roughly equaled U.S. numbers during the same time period,[36] but each operated under their own national caveat restrictions. The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) had 86,000 troops in 2006[37] but more than half of those personnel were MoI police who were poorly trained and suffered from rampant corruption.[38] In 2006, the U.S. CT force, TF 714, played only a limited role in Afghanistan.[39] In fact, TF 714 did not even start targeting the TB until 2006.[40] Even though the coalition had developed a somewhat balanced IW campaign in 2002 (CT, FID, and SO), the size of the force was too small to provide stability while the Afghan Government developed and SO did little to counter the growing insurgency.

Evidence that Taliban propaganda built on the widely perceived corruption in the Afghan government, the lack of promised government services, and the historic fight against the infidel invaders has been very widely reported.[41] One Afghan tells how he used to hate TB because they outlawed poppy. He claimed that after the TB fell, all of Helmand was happy because they could grow poppy again.[42] "But then the warlords came back and let their militias roam freely. They were settling old scores – killing people, stealing their opium. And because they belonged

to the government, the people [could not] look to the government for protection. And because they had the ear of the Americans, the people [could not] look to the Americans."[43] And so now, the Taliban protects the poppy and has wide support.[44] Another Afghan complained about the government's incompetence at arresting Taliban. "I am only afraid of the government. Look at what they do. They can't get the Taliban, so they arrest us. We have no hope from them anymore. And when we call and tell them Taliban are here, no one comes."[45] The few coalition troops in country were conducting operations to destroy the enemy, failing to find them, and making little progress on connecting the population to a government less corrupt than the Taliban. Many Afghans, in 2006, picked the lesser of two evils and said that neither the TB nor the government provided security, but at least the Taliban provided justice.[46]

In 2006 U.S. and NATO forces launched two operations in Southern Afghanistan, as part of the new theater strategy, [47] to clear out the insurgents so that NATO peacekeepers and intensified civilian reconstruction could "hold and build" to win over the population.[48] The only metric provided in a congressional report as to the impact of the operation was 700 enemy killed-in-action.[49] There was no attempt at describing how the operation was addressing the grievances that were fueling the insurgency.

Most Afghans wanted their livelihood protected, security and justice, and a government that did not take advantage of them.[50] While many units were employing traditional COIN techniques in 2007 and 2008, it was not until 2009 that General McChrystal organized a more robust and holistic counterinsurgency campaign focused on better managing the application of violence and address grievances.[51] Local leaders, who had been living with the Taliban for years accepted McChrystal's approach. Before U.S. forces went into re-take Marjah in 2010, McChrystal explained during a shura with elders that violence would not be used

indiscriminately and that the operation would simultaneously drive out insurgents while focusing on their protection, contrary to previous operations.[52] The elders gave their support but under three conditions: you don't destroy everything, you stay, and you provide a new police force that does not take advantage of us.[53]

In 2010, General Petraeus built on General McChrystal's COIN strategy by increasing CT operations and expanding UW programs. According to General Allen's testimony in 2012, the CT force conducted over 4,500 night raids in 2011 and 2012 maintaining an 83% capture rate of the targeted individual or his direct associate.[54] Of note, civilian casualties occurred, incredibly, in only 1.5% of all operations[55] - giving credence to the precise nature of those operations. The Afghan Local Police (ALP) program provided a bottom-up UW force with legitimate and robust support from US SOF for the first time in the current war.[56] Initial ALP numbers increased from 10,000 to 30,000 authorized from 2010 to 2011 with programs in the 84 of 136 authorized districts, as of November 2012.[57] A concerted effort and balanced IW campaign from 2009 through 2012 have put the U.S. in a position where they can transition security to Afghan forces without significant risk of the ANSF collapsing. While some operations like night raids, kinetic strikes, and using drones were often sensitive and controversial, they were used relentlessly in many key provinces (like Kandahar and Helmand) and because they were precise, they were absolutely essential to making progress.[58] In the key districts where a balanced IW strategy was applied, the gains have been unmistakable.

Kandahar Province provides an excellent example of how an aggressive and balanced IW campaign used precision violence to create space while allowing non-lethal means to take root. Kandahar has historically been in the top three most violent categories throughout the country (competing with Helmand and Kunar) but has also been the beneficiary of a robust and focused

IW strategy (like Helmand but unlike Kunar).[59] Because of an aggressive CT campaign, a large

COIN presence, and a large ANSF presence (byproduct of FID) from 2010 to 2012, security

improvements led to small grassroots security movements in the worst areas of Panjwai District

with only one to two small arms attacks a week.[60]

While Afghanistan in 2013 is far from where the U.S. envisioned it would be back in

2002, the campaign has certainly entered a new phase where (in key regions) less capable and

less efficient Taliban leaders are facing a very robust ANSF (Afghan National Army, police

force, and local police force) living among the population. According to General James Amos

and commanders in Helmand, the ANSF currently outmatch the TB in every regard.[61] The TB

also have to contend with an imperfect but improving Afghan Government that has shown real

signs of curbing malign actors and addressing grievances in an effort to improve legitimacy.

Additionally a U.S. led coalition will remain in Afghanistan to train, advise, and conduct CT

missions past 2014 with an Afghan-U.S. security cooperation agreement through 2024.[62] This

situation clearly demonstrates the significant gains that can be achieved through a robust,

comprehensive, and balanced approach to countering an irregular adversary.

SECTION 2: LESSONS FROM WAR – EMPLOYING VIOLENCE

Iraq and Afghanistan analysis has shown the often-counterproductive effects of imprecise

violence but has also shown the absolute necessity in conducting focused targeting in order to

create space and opportunity for non-lethal approaches to take hold. In these cases, the desired

effects have only been achieved with a balanced, robust, and comprehensive IW campaign.

Military leaders, at times, drew the wrong lessons from previous operations and the correct

campaign balance was not achieved until much later in the war. As the US Army transitions

from a force "no longer sized to conduct large-scale, prolonged stability operations"[63] to an agile

and versatile organization prepared to operate in a "wide spectrum of complex environments"[64] against a regular, irregular, or hybrid adversary[65] how the force chooses to employ violence in future operations will be crucial to achieving its operational and strategic objectives. Analysis on the three lessons below attempt to contribute to that conversation.

- Lesson #1 – Violence is crucial to creating space and opportunity but when employed must be accompanied with a thorough IO narrative that explains truth to the desired audience.

- Lesson #2 – Conventional forces can and must be precise with their violence. Precision is about target refinement and restraint. Conventional forces have the assets and capacity to achieve precision, as many units have previously demonstrated, with focused training.

- Lesson #3 – Conventional forces need an organic ability to employ violence with precision in concert with the non-lethal approach vs. an irregular opponent. SOF cannot provide all precise targeting all the time. General-purpose-forces must be able to do both in order achieve proper IW campaign balance.

Mission Aligned Force or Capability Gap?

Analyzing Lesson #1: It is a fact that excess violence is often counterproductive against an insurgency; the military became keenly aware of this throughout the GWOT and correctly adopted a counterinsurgency approach to combat the threat. Many, however, simply avoided employing violence that brought with it negative perceptions. Paradoxically, day time patrols conducted amongst crowded civilians often put the population at much greater risk as insurgents regularly initiated attacks in order to illicit an overreaction, which they regularly received, to drive a wedge between the population and the coalition. The point is that violence is employed to create space and opportunity for something else to take hold,[66] but it must be accompanied with an equally powerful IO narrative that explains truth to impact the popular perception it is

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trying to manage. Units should not avoid certain operations simply because there may be a bad perception, if those poor perceptions are false. If they are true, then stop them. For example regular bomb drops on compounds that risked killing civilians (and showing the population we were not fighting for their protection) far outweighed the necessity to kill a handful of insurgents. As an example of how precise targeting can achieve significant results, in 2009 a CT unit focused its targeting efforts on an AO where the battle space owner had experienced 19 U.S. casualties from IEDs over a three-day period. After 30 days of focused targeting by the CT force, in concert with the BSO patrols, IED events dropped by 90%, greatly improving the BSO's freedom of action for COIN operations.[67] Units need to reinforce precise targeting with an equally coherent IO plan in order to create space and opportunity.

Analyzing Lesson #2: Some argue that conventional forces, because of the quality of training and resources, cannot be as precise as many SOF or CT forces who have the best training and resources. Well, they are correct CF will not be as precise as SOF – but they don't need to execute raids with surgical precision. The question is can they be precise? And the answer is absolutely. Precision targeting is achieved through target refinement and restraint. In order to properly refine a target a unit needs to use the ISR collection assets to develop a target and refine his pattern of life so that an assault force can plan a raid to capture him (or kill if the targeted individual displays hostile intent or commits a hostile act). This gets into the restraint piece of precision. An assault force needs to train on identifying a hostile act and intent, escalation of force, and other assault or call-out TTPs. The author believes that conventional forces, by nature of their operations, would be the best forces to exercise restraint as they have been more intermingled with civilians during patrols and been forced to distinguish between

hostile act, intent, and innocent by-standard when regularly attacked among a civilian population more frequently than many SOF.

Analyzing Lesson #3: The 2013 Army Strategic Planning Guidance describes a force tailored to support three primary missions (conducting CT and IW, deterring or defeating aggression, and defending the homeland) by aligning Army units against a particular mission set.[68] Some may take this guidance to mean that the conventional force needs to become more singularly focused on defeating aggression. A counterargument may be that as the force re-balances its training requirement between regular and irregular threats, conventional forces need to focus on the non-lethal side of COIN as CT/SOF focus on direct action raids. Different forces should provide different capabilities and when those capabilities are combined, best effects are achieved. And while best effects are achieved with complimentary approaches, it is an incorrect assumption to presume that SOF/CT can provide all targeting requirements in an unknown future operating environment. The 2013 ASPG further describes a force with "capabilities tailored for one or more of those [three primary] missions."[69] Conventional forces cannot assume that SOF can fulfill all targeting requirements in a future irregular/hybrid conflict. Early efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan show the shortcomings of a campaign with singular approaches based on limited capability. In a recent publication, by a former commander of CT forces in Afghanistan the author indicates that while the CT force at times needed reminding that conducting operations to protect the BSO were important it was equally important for conventional forces to be able to rid the battle space of routine threats,[70] implying that at times conventional forces overly relied on the CT force to conduct the majority of the lethal targeting in their AO. In areas where the CT force had been operating at a very high pace, the issue was less relevant; but in areas where CT force operations were limited, the BSO would have had a limited IW strategy,

unless they were conducting their own targeting. CF needs to possess both precise lethal / non-lethal targeting capabilities to achieve a balanced IW approach, within their primary COIN and SO roles. The force needs a "broad set of tools" to combine direct and indirect approaches.[71] While Collaborative SOF – GPF targeting have produced very good results,[72] SOF should not be relied upon to fulfill all precise targeting requirements.

SECTION 3: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

In order to institutionalize enduring lessons from the previous conflicts those lessons must be reflected in organizational structure, training and education, and leadership. Without a war that forces units to apply the latest and most efficient TTPs, it is up to leaders to implement and prioritize these lessons, as their force will have increasingly less opportunity to practice them. The rest of this paper will provide recommendations on how to implement organizational, training, and leader education changes so that conventional units are able to more precisely apply violence in future irregular or hybrid conflicts.

Organizing: Many in the special operations community have written on how an adaptive and creative enemy forced the organization to become more streamlined, less bureaucratic, and better networked, eventually leading to the F3EA targeting cycle (find-fix-finish-exploit-analyze) that became synonymous with successful CT operations.[73] The process was designed for targeting individuals and while F3EA should be used when targeting specific members of a network it may not apply to all military operations where D3A (decide-detect-deliver-assess) may be more applicable.[74] What really differentiated F3EA from other intelligence/targeting models was the fusion between intelligence analysts, ISR operators, operational units, exploitation analysts, the information the detainees themselves provide and the importance of the find, exploit, and analyze phases.[75] Creating an organization that priorities intelligence-

operational fusion is what allows a unit to properly refine a target's location by using ISR assets to develop pattern of life behavior and refine the target location so that an assault force is searching two or three compounds instead of cordoning off an entire village and clearing two or three-hundred. The precision difference between two and two-hundred precision is obvious and any negative operational impacts from a raid is reduced to the immediate area and those most closely associated with the insurgent. This discriminate violence is more tolerated by the rest of the community who is usually less tied to the insurgent than the targeted individual and his family.

Both LTG Michael Flynn and the Joint Staff have written extensively about the inherent efficiencies and effectiveness gained by investing in fusion cells, breaking-down over classification barriers, getting the right clearances so that information can be shared, and combining all of the "INTs" in order to create shared understanding and a synchronized view of the operating environment for all.[76] In the Joint Staff's ten enduring lessons learned from the last decade, the only theme common to all ten enduring lessons was intelligence fusion.[77] Tactical operations cells that put all-source analysts, SIGINT and HUMINT collectors, imagery analysts, ISR controllers, operations officers, staff officers, and commanders in the same room focused on the commander's collection priorities can produce the intelligence-operational fusion required to not just conduct precision raids but all military operations that require an informed, adaptable organization that can make timely decisions based on operational requirements. This level of shared understanding is not just required for an irregular war but should be the standard for integration against all opponents.

Training: Training and education are the best way to institutionalize operational changes. Irregular Warfare studies have repeatedly shown that gaps in education and training

create organizations that are slow to adapt.[78] The Joint Staff's Decade of War Study highlights how often ineffective conventional warfare approaches failed to achieve desired objectives and noted that the precise use of force was a critical tool in a comprehensive campaign.[79] Their recommendation on institutionalizing these lessons described updating education and training as essential; critical tasks like ISR integration, reorienting intelligence and fusing it with operations were also repeatedly mentioned.[80]

Many units focus a preponderance of their training and energy on the finish portion of the process leaving the find/fix and exploitation/analysis as an afterthought. In practice, however, finishing the enemy does not occur without the preceding steps. Better understanding of the enemy (and possible follow-on targets) does not materialize without the later. Parent organizations should mandate staff and leader intelligence fusion and ISR management training (beginning at the battalion) and can deploy mobile training team experts to execute the training. Combat Training Centers (CTC) should focus their pre-rotation training and evaluation on how efficient and effective staffs are at fusing intelligence and operations against an irregular or hybrid threat. F3EA and targeting expertise exists within both special operations and the conventional force and can be proliferated to the force by coordinating with those units which retain that expertise.

At the tactical level (battalion and below), leaders in the units conducting the raids should understand targeting and conduct training focused on exercising restraint during operations. Conducting a raid is often part of an infantry unit's Mission Essential Task List (METL) but escalation of force training and specific assault TTPs, like conducting a call-out of a compound, are implied tasks that units may not be familiar with. Like F3EA targeting, leaders with this expertise reside within the current force. TRADOC and the CTCs should visit those operational

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units, like the 75th Ranger Regiment, (a special operations infantry unit whose primary mission includes conducting special operations raids) to learn those techniques.

Leadership: Leadership is crucial to implementing change at any level. While a staff often conducts all but the finish portion of the process, the targeting process is not successful without the operational commander commanding throughout. Commanders and leaders must understand how to integrate ISR and know the capabilities of the systems they are employing. Many, however, do not.[81] Without commanders that are eager to understand the tools of collection, their assets may often be mismanaged,[82] preventing the organization from understanding the battlefield at the level required to be most effective.   Institutional education and training is required in both the school house and TRADOC environments in order for leaders, without the opportunity to manage ISR in combat, to learn. Leaders have to dive into and own intelligence-operations fusion for the staff and subordinates to buy in. In order to be an expert, one first has to study the problem. For, "the closer one gets to any problem, the more one understands it and can focus on solving it."[83]

Without incorporating enduring lessons on how to apply violence precisely and how to plan and implement balanced IW campaigns into our formal training and education institutions individual leaders will prioritize lessons based on their personal understanding or individual experiences from the last decade of combat. TRADOC's incorporation of hybrid warfare in National Training Center rotations is a great step[84] and should be the default threat for the foreseeable future. Formal education on issues like applying violence with precision, balancing IW campaigns, and intelligence-operational fusion must be more thoroughly discussed in the US Army professional military education and it must be an integral part of directed training, just like it is making its way into doctrine. An NCO will tell you not to expect what you do not inspect.

If the Army is not focusing on and evaluating these areas in education and training, then the force will not be prepared to execute it well when required.

CONCLUSION

Critically analyzing Iraq and Afghanistan showed how violence can contribute to or detract from one's attempt to accomplish his operational and strategic objectives. As the war evolved and the force adapted, managing violence and balancing campaign approaches were arguably the most difficult and important decisions commanders made. Well-managed violence and balanced strategies often meant progress, while mismanagement and imbalance often resulted in lost ground. War is hard and irregular war is harder. All leaders draw faulty conclusions and make mistakes in war, but timely adaptation is often the difference in achieving your end-state or settling for a less than optimal outcome. By using education and training to understand IW and institutionalize new lessons, perhaps leaders and the force can recognize when they need to adapt sooner and ultimately create better effects on the battlefield. It is the author's hope that by highlighting lessons in applying violence and balancing IW campaigns that the force, and in-particular the conventional force, will further discuss TTPs, and encourage all to train and prepare with the same vigor and urgency that we did when we faced certain combat. To be best prepared for an unknown fight the force must focus on its core capabilities vs. preparing for everything. We must also grow, however, to incorporate the enduring lessons from this previous conflict. It is my opinion that there exists a capability gap between SOF and Conventional Forces and that by learning how to target more precisely, the Conventional Force can fill that gap. If the force wishes to institutionalize those enduring lessons from the last decade of war, those practices must be reflected in organizational structure, training, education, and leadership.

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